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GUARDIANS
OF THE GALAXY
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In the wake of two catastrophic Annihilation events, the Universe is in a fragile and weakened state. With the fabric of space itself damaged, anomalous fissures are beginning to appear, fissures that could crack and spread, collapsing reality and letting in

things that should not exist in our dimension.
Guided by the mystical insight of the newly returned Adam Warlock, the gun slinging Star-Lord has forged a proactive team of proven cosmic champions ready to protect the vulnerable universe and prevent any large-scale disasters from ever happening again. Together, Star-Lord, Warlock, Quasar, Gamora, Drax, Mantis and Rocket Raccoon are the...

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

Phyla-Vell and Drax embarked on a quest to find Moondragon, Phyla's lover and Drax's daughter, who was murdered during the Phalanx conquest. On Titan, they confronted Mentor, Moondragon's step-father, who killed them both so that their spirits could pass beyond the barrier of death into the realm of Oblivion, where Moondragon was trapped.

But other forces waited for them there, namely Maelstrom, the malevolent trickster who was desperate to escape Oblivion. He took possession of Phyla's quantum bands, and used Phyla and Drax as sacrificial offerings to the one creature that can free him from the outer void—the slumbering, apocalyptic demon known as the Dragon of the Moon...

STAR-LORD (PETER QUILL)

ADAM WARLOCK

GAMORA

MANTIS

ROCKET RACCOON

DRAX

QUASAR (PHYLA-VELL)

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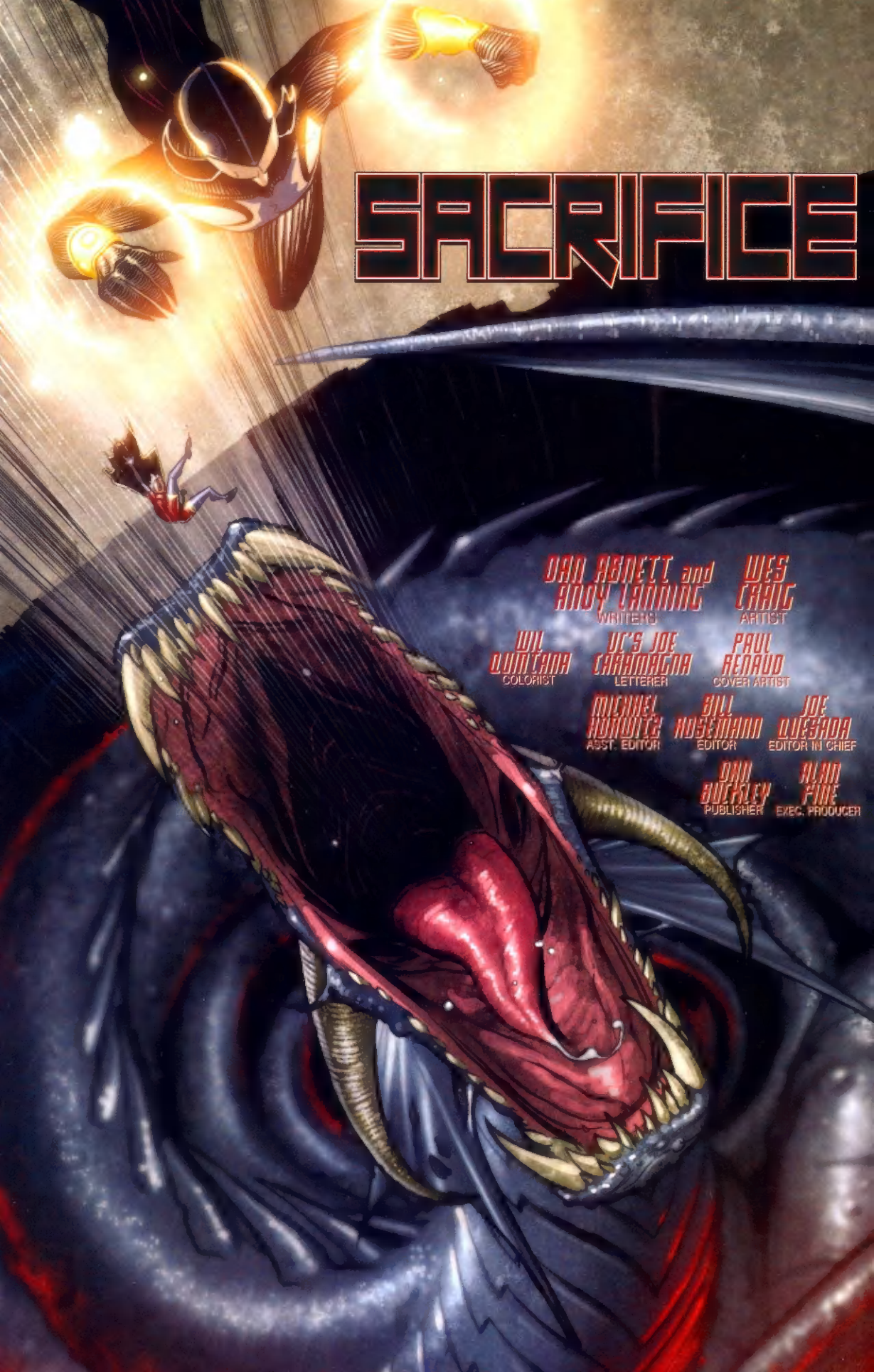
THE DRAGON OF THE MOON HAS ALWAYS BEEN THERE.
IT IS A CREATURE OF DEMONIC LUSTS AND APOCALYPTIC APPETITES.
I CAN HEAR IT, PHYLA. I CAN HEAR IT LAUGHING IN THE CORNERS OF MY MIND.
IT REALLY SCARES ME.
IT WANTS TO ESCAPE FROM OBLIVION. IT WANTS TO GET OUT.
I WAS ITS BRIDGE INTO THE REAL WORLD. IT COILED AROUND ME SO TIGHTLY, I BECAME ITS LIVING IMAGE.
BUT IT CAN'T USE ME ANY MORE.
SO IT NEEDS SOMEONE ELSE.
IT NEEDS TO FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO USE.
DON'T LET IT USE YOU, PHYLA.
HEATHER! HEATHER, DON'T GO!
DON'T GO...HEATHER... PLEASE...
WAKE UP! WAKE UP!

OH HOLY PAMA!
I CAN'T FEED YOU TO A GIANT DEMONIC DRAGON IF YOU'RE ASLEEP!
WHERE WOULD THE FUN BE IN THAT?
THE DRAGON'S WAKING UP. HE'S GOING TO BE EVER SO HUNGRY.
WHEN I FEED HIM, HE'S GOING TO BE EVER SO GRATEFUL.
AND WHEN I GET OUT OF THIS, MAELSTROM, I'M GOING TO GUT YOU LIKE A DEER.
BLAH BLAH WHATEVER.
POINT IS, DRAX, YOU WON'T GET OUT. I'VE GOT PHYLA'S QUANTUM BANDS. I'VE GOT THE POWER.
I GET TO MAKE THE DECISIONS.
LIKE... IT'S SUPPER TIME!
AAAHHH!
PHYLA!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IT SWALLOWED HER! IT JUST *SWALLOWED* HER!
MAELSTROM, YOU TWISTED--

YEAH, REALLY NOT INTERESTED IN *ANYTHING* YOU'VE GOT TO SAY, DRAX.
YOU'RE NOT A *SPARKLING* CONVERSATIONALIST.
WITH YOU IT'S ALL *THREATS* AND *SNARLS*.

ANYWAY, IT'S YOUR TURN. YOU'RE LIKE... *PUDDING*.
SO HOLD ONTO YOUR HAT AND KISS YOUR--
HEY. IS THAT A STAR? I NEVER NOTICED IT BEFORE.

OH ☠☠☠☠...

...THAT'S NOT A STAR.

NHHHH!
GAAH!
GUH!
NHH!
UHK!
CH-KRASH
THOOM

WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW... WENDELL VAUGHN, MY OLD DANCING PARTNER.
I HEARD THAT ANNIHILUS FRIED YOU LIKE AN EGG. I GUESS EVERYONE'S COMING BACK FROM THE DEAD THESE DAYS.
IT'S SO PASSÉ.
WHERE'S PHYLA, MAELSTROM? WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER?
SHE DISAGREED WITH SOMETHING THAT ATE HER.
WHAT DO YOU CARE?
BECAUSE I WORE THEM FOR SO LONG, MY SOUL IS INEXTRICABLY LINKED TO THE QUANTUM BANDS. I FELT THE USER OF THE BANDS DIE. HER DOOM BROUGHT ME HERE.
PHYLA-VELL IS DEAD, MAELSTROM. DID YOU KILL HER?
THE USER OF THE BANDS IS VERY MUCH ALIVE.
SEE?
THEY'RE MINE, VAUGHN. MINE.
NOW YOU SEEM TO HAVE COME BACK FROM THE DEAD IN A QUANTUM LIGHT FORM.
AND THE BANDS...WELL, I DON'T NEED TO TELL YOU THEY CONTROL QUANTUM LIGHT.

IN THE NEXT FIVE MINUTES IT'S GOING TO SUCK BEING YOU, WENDELL VAUGHN.
YOU WERE AN IDIOT TO FACE ME THIS WAY. I OWN YOU.
UGHHHN!
WHAM
I TOTALLY OWN YOU.
GAAAHH!
HANDS OFF.
OOH!
SHUNK
SHUNK

OH...
GOD.
THAT IS SO PAINFUL.
YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT WHEN YOU DID IT TO ME, YEARS AGO.
THANKS, DRAX.
YOU WANT ME TO FINISH THE JOB, VAUGHN?
NO, I'LL DEAL WITH MAELSTROM.
MHHMMM. OH, THAT FEELS GOOD. I'VE MISSED THE BANDS SO MUCH.
YEAH, OKAY, IT'S YOUR BIG MOMENT...
...VAUGHN GETS THE BANDS BACK. WOW. WE GET IT.
I JUST WANT TO SAY ONE THING.
WHAT?
BEHIND YOU.
*****

LOOK WHO WOKE UP.

THE DRAGON OF THE MOON. THAT'S PRETTY *MAJOR* LEAGUE.

DRAX, YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS STUFF. WHAT'S THE BEST THING TO USE AGAINST A DRAGON?

TRADITIONALLY?

Y-HUH.

I'D GO WITH A LANCE.

GOOD CALL.

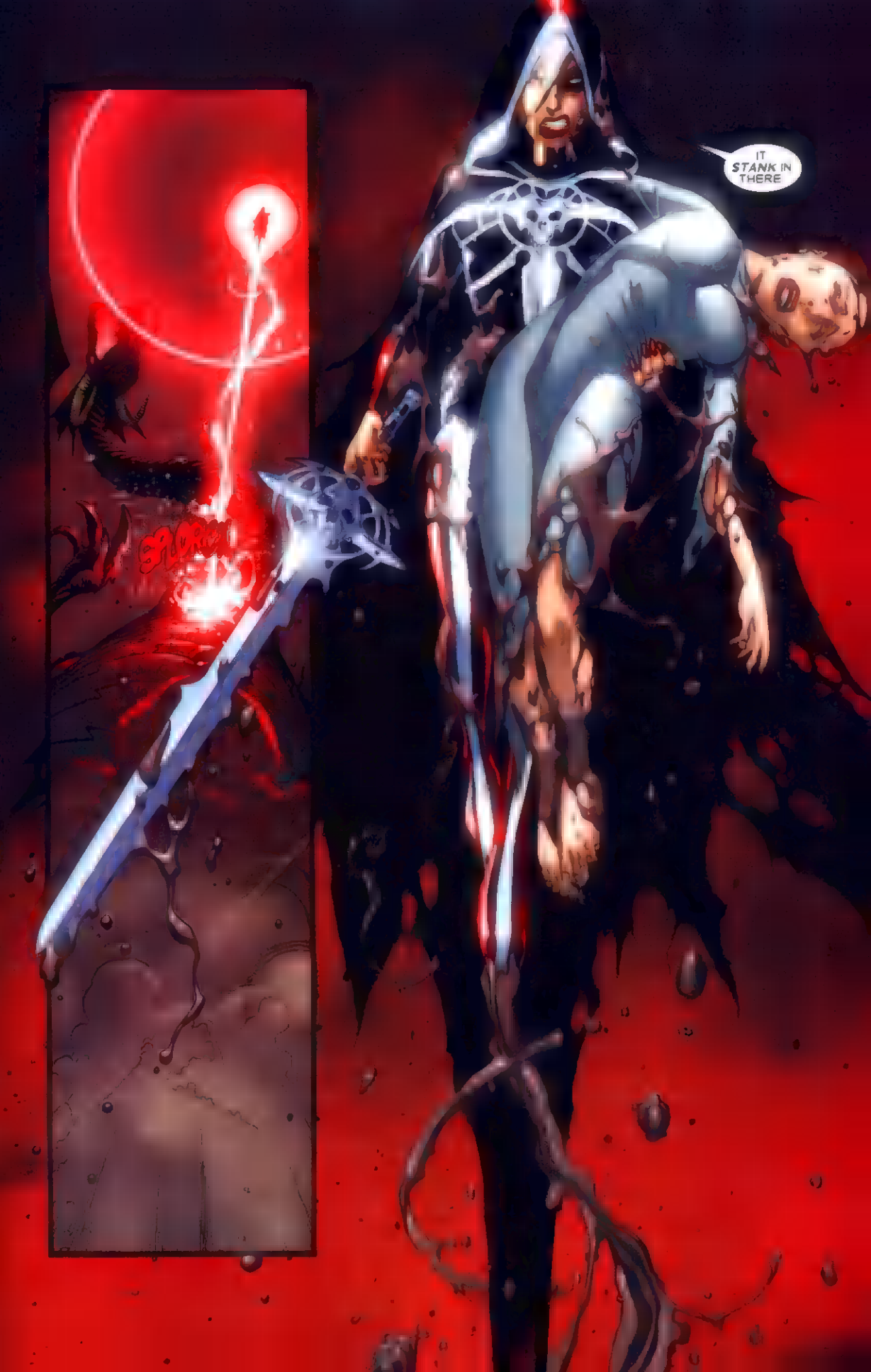
ZHMMM ZHMMM

CH-ZZTTTT

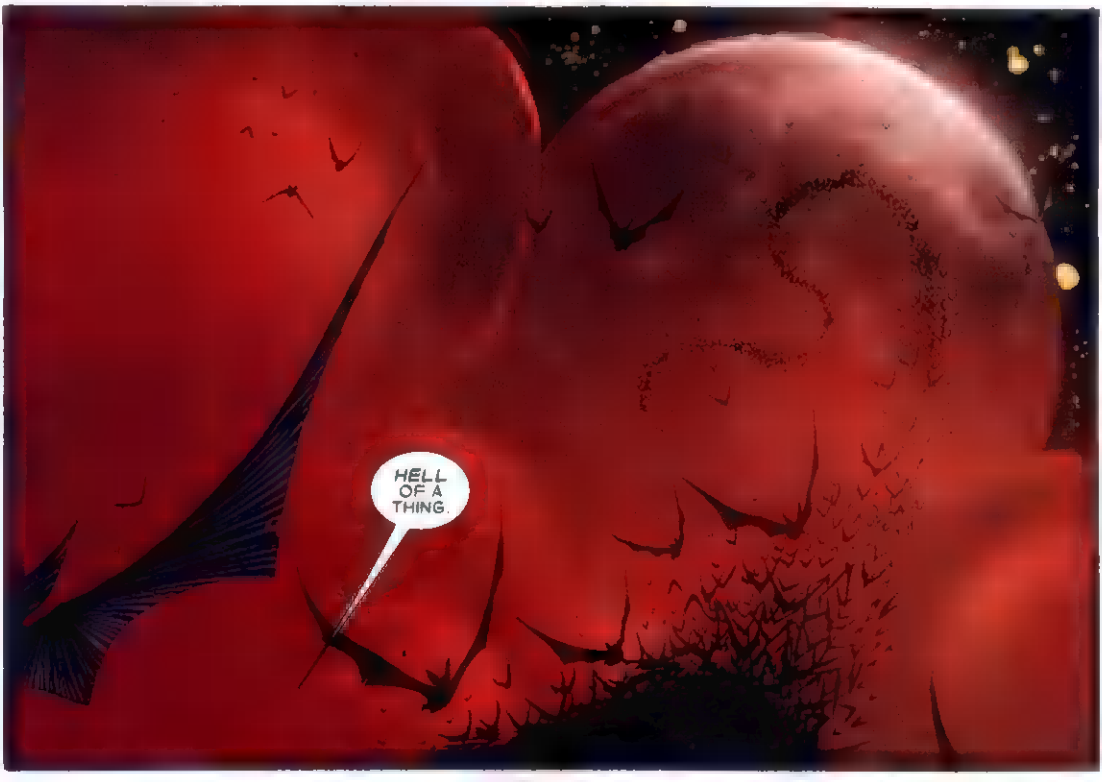
OKAY, NOT EVEN *SLIGHTLY* WORKING.

OH, THIS IS PRICELESS! PRICELESS!
THE DRAGON'S NOT ONLY GOING TO GET THE LIFE FORCE OF PHYLA-VELL AND DRAX THE WHO'S-HIS-NAME DESTROYER, IT'S GOING TO GET VAUGHN'S ESSENCE TOO!
DELICIOUS!
IT'S GOING TO LOVE [redacted] FOR THIS!
YOU PLANNED THIS ALL ALONG, YOU SON OF A SHLAG!
NO, NOT AT ALL! THIS [redacted] JUST SERENDIPITY!
BUT I DO LOVE IT WHEN THINGS GET SERIOUSLY [redacted] UP FOR THE SO-CALLED GOOD GUYS!

HRRAAHHH!
WHAT IS--?
SOMETHING WITH ITS GUT?
KRTCSH


IT STANK IN THERE
SPLURCH

I FOUND HEATHER, DRAX. I BROUGHT HER *BACK*.
OUT OF THE DRAGON'S *GULLET*.
HELL OF A THING, PHYLA.


HELL OF A THING.

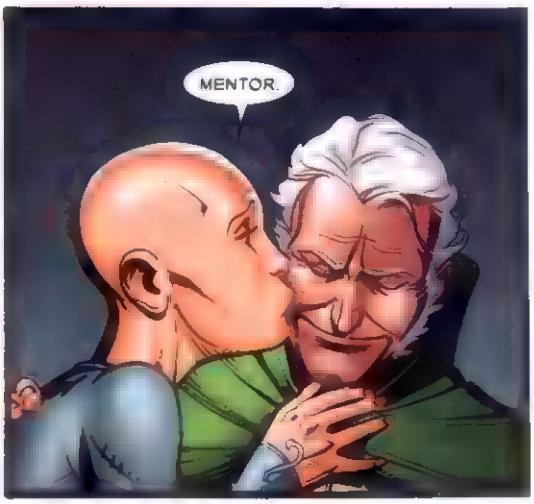
TAKE HER.
PHYLA, I... THANK YOU.
THESE BELONG TO YOU.
THEY DO.
NO.
WENDELL, YOU'RE QUASAR. YOU'RE THE PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE.
I TRIED MY BEST, BUT I NEVER CAME CLOSE TO FILLING YOUR SHOES.
AND I'M SO HAPPY TO SEE YOU ALIVE AGAIN.
I WAS JUST LOOKING AFTER THE BANDS UNTIL YOU CAME BACK.
I APPRECIATE THAT.
THEY'LL ALWAYS BE PART OF YOU, PHYLA-VELL. YOUR QUANTUM SWORD WILL STILL DRAW ITS POWER FROM THEM.
BUT I HAVE POWERS OF MY OWN.
SO IT WOULD APPEAR. WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU ■ THERE?
STUFF.
I RESCUED HEATHER. THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS.
NO. IT ISN'T.
WHAT DID YOU DO, PHYLA?
WHAT DID YOU PROMISE THE DRAGON? WHAT KIND OF PRICE DID YOU AGREE TO?

I WANTED YOU BACK. I GAVE IT *EVERYTHING* IT WANTED. YOU'D HAVE DONE *EXACTLY* THE SAME THING.
NOW SHUT UP AND KISS ME.
GOOD TO SEE YOU ALIVE AGAIN, WENDELL. LAST TIME WE MET, YOU WERE GETTING MURDERED ON NYCOS ARISTEDES.
THE GUARDIANS COULD USE SOME HEAVY MUSCLE LIKE YOU.
YOUR GUARDIANS WILL HAVE TO *WAIT*, DRAX.
I NEED TO GET BACK TO EARTH AND HELP *RICHARD RIDER*.*
AND [redacted] SHOULD--
DAMN! WHERE [redacted] MAELSTROM GO?
HIS [redacted] PLANS [redacted] RUINED, AND WITHOUT THE BANDS HE'S HELPLESS.
MAYBE... BUT THERE'S ANOTHER THING THAT WORRIES ME...
I CAN FLY OUT OF THE REALM OF OBLIVION. I'M NOT SURE HOW YOU GUYS GET OUT.
WE'LL [redacted] *FINE*, WENDELL VAUGHN...
...WE JUST HAVE TO WAKE UP.

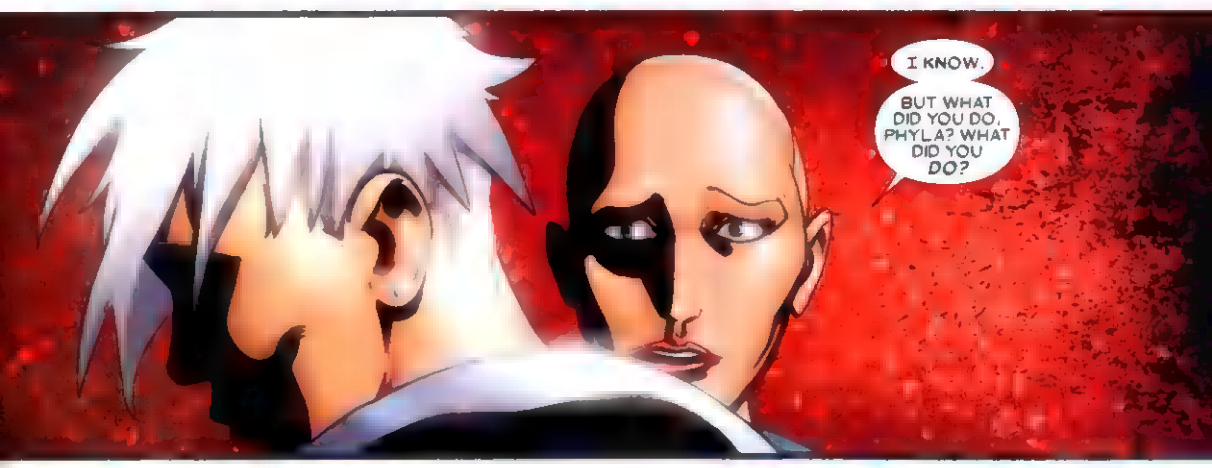
TITAN.
TWO HEARTBEATS LATER...
OH MY GOD!
YOU'RE ALIVE! THANK GOODNESS!
YOU KILLED US. YOU KILLED US, YOU LUNATIC!
AAAHH!
YOU KILLED US! MENTOR, YOU KILLED US!
ONLY SO YOU COULD RESCUE HEATHER! I WAS TRY TO HELP!
PHYLA! PLEASE!
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
SOMETHING HAPPENED!
NOTHING. IT DOESN'T MATTER.
YOU GAVE TOO MUCH OF YOURSELF, PHYLA. TOO MUCH.

FOR THE SECOND TIME, I HAVE BEEN REBORN INTO A TITAN-CLONED BODY.
I HAVE DIED TOO MANY TIMES. MY SOUL ACHES FROM IT.

FATHER. YOU CAME FOR [redacted].
YOU'RE MY KID. WHAT ELSE WOULD I DO?


MENTOR.

I LOVE YOU, PHYLA-VELL.
AND I LOVE YOU, HEATHER DOUGLAS.
I'VE MISSED YOU


I KNOW.
BUT WHAT DID YOU DO, PHYLA? WHAT DID YOU DO?

OBLIVION.
TWO HOURS LATER.
NNH
OH, HELLO.

TCH.
WELL...
...WE DID IT, MY LORD OBLIVION...

..DEATH HAS A NEW AVATAR.
AND THE END WAR IS ABOUT TO BEGIN.
WC.09
NEXT:
WAR OF KINGS!